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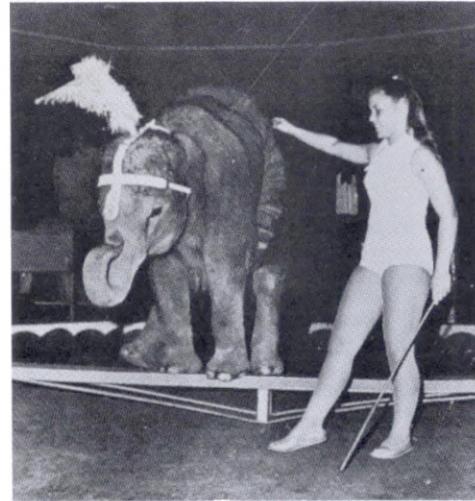
**Thank you for your interest,
help and support throughout the years.**

BIG JOHN STRONG'S CIRCUS

MERRY CHRISTMAS
& HAPPY NEW YEAR

from

BIG JOHN,
RUTH,
SANDY,
LINDA,
AND JOHNNY STRONG !!



A very special thanks to the following people for their love of the Circus, and their help and their visit, making our tour in "72" a great one.



1. Bill and Ruth Green, Nebraska
2. Julian Jimenez, Roman and Mr. Brown, all Kansas City, Mo.
3. Helen & Shirley Walters and Margaret McKay, Kansas
4. Paul Van Pool & Daughter, Tulsa
5. Jack and Jake Mills, Cleveland.
6. Betty & Bunny Bartok, Harry Hammond and all members of the Circus Bartok (Thanks for the dog.)
7. Fred D. Pfening, Tony Diano and Norman Senhauser, Canton, Ohio.
8. Walt King, Warren, Michigan.
9. Col. Pete Pepke, Cleveland.
10. Ed Freeman, Prof. Byron Burford, and Jack Bennett, Davenport, Iowa.
11. C. C. Day, Omaha, Neb.
12. Gene McDonald, wife and all the Seattle fans.
13. Clowns from Ogden, Utah.
14. Paul and Kay Pugh, Chang Reynolds and Suzie.
15. Don Marcks, California
16. Tom Upton, California
17. Homer Stark, California
18. Eddie Howe, California
19. Percy Turner, San Diego
20. William (Bill) Burger, San Diego
21. Joe Rettinger and all his gang from Phoenix.

Sorry if I missed any one, we enjoyed seeing you all during the cross country tour in 1972.
- Big John

THE PARALLEL DEVELOPMENT OF CIRCUSES AND BANDS IN AMERICA

BY SVERRE O.
AND
FAYE O. BRAATHEN

The cornerstone of circuses in America has always been music. Without music we should never have had a circus parade, side show, big top performance, concert or aftershow. From about 1880 until the beginning of the First World War in 1917 it was not uncommon to find twenty or more musicians on a circus that carried fewer than a hundred people. In mud wagon days the musicians helped put it up and take it down. Following this hard labor there was the street parade. Upon the return to the lot there might be an opportunity to hasten to the cookhouse for a bite to eat before proceeding to the center ring for an hours concert. There followed the main performance after which the band played for the wild west or after show concert. Thus it is apparent that for circus musicians of those decades there was very little rest or leisure time between the hour the show arrived in a given town and the hour it departed late that night.

For many years men who could blow a horn or beat a drum, were given preference not alone as performers but also as ushers, ticket sellers and clowns. A street parade required many more musicians than any circus carried in its big band. Therefore many whose chief employment was in some other department literally has to "double in brass" that the street parade might be possible. Also musicians were essential in those days to ballyhoo the side show throughout most of the day.

Without the great composers of circus music, Russell Alexander, Karl L. King, Frederic Alton Jewell, Walter P. English, Charles E. Duble and others there would have been no stirring marches to set the tempo for the street parades. Nor would there have been the ringing marches, the lilting waltzes and the fast galope to cue the performances. Very little music not written by circus composers was suitable for parade or performance. It was the circus musicians who captured the pulse beat and the life blood of the sawdust ring. Composers of circus music have been to the tanbark trail what Beethoven, Mozart, Wagner, Haydn and their counterparts have been to the concert stage.

The circus band was actually the trademark of any circus. It was the circus band that distinguished the circus from all other forms of amusement. It was the band that enabled the circus performer to display his full artistry.

Likewise circus music had a definite

effect on the workingmen about the lot. A circus operated on split-second timing, for a minute lost here and three minutes there and five minutes somewhere else through the day might mean the trains would have to sit on a siding for one or more hours that night to let passenger or fast freight through. The following story has often been told: One of the larger circuses was giving a John Robinson (a curtailed performance) one night because of an unusually long haul to the next days stand. A workman doing a certain job in the backyard of the circus has been accustomed to the tempo of music customary at that particular night chanced to bring a slow waltz at this hour. The workman threw down his heavy "props" in complete disgust, with the remark, "Who in hell can work to that kind of music."

In this country instrumental music and

Bands were featured with early shows. In 1878 the D. W. Stone Grand Circus and Musical Brigade advertised 37 Eminent Instrumentalists, led by J. A. Emidy, all uniformed as the Imperial Guard of Napoleon III. This illustration is from a picture card. All illustrations from the Pfening Collection.

D. W. STONE'S GRAND CIRCUS

— AND —

MUSICAL BRIGADE,

Will appear as announced presenting the following

DISTINGUISHED ARTISTS, &c.

IN THEIR

UNRIVALLED SPECIALTIES:

MADAM CAROLINE ROLLAND,

MISS EMMA STICKNEY,

LAWRENCE SISTERS, (Hattie and Jennie,

ROBERT STICKNEY,

RUDOLPH METTE,

CHARLES LOWRIE,

"LEWIS,"

FRED'K F. LEVANTINE,

METTE BROTHERS,

DUVAL BROTHERS,

SHED, LECLAIRE,

JAMES CAMPBELL,

CHARLES S. BURROWS,

NICHOLAS LAWRENCE,

THOMAS MURRAY,

ADOLPH LIVINGSTONE,

CLOWNS,

WILLIAM CONRAD,

WILLIAM E. BURKE.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—Parade each day of exhibition, at 10 o'clock, A. M., by the Mammoth Musical Organization of

37 Eminent Instrumentalists, 37

Lead by J. A. EMIDY, uniformed as the IMPERIAL GUARD OF NAPOLEON III. Particulars in programmes and advertisements.

Performances Afternoon and Night.

the circus were born in about the same locality and at about the same time in history and both met with the charge of immorality. These were accompanied by a third development which fortunately met quite a different fate. This was the menagerie. The citizens of New York State and of New England considered the menagerie to be educational and to be encouraged. Not so the circus and instrumental music. They were the handmaidens of Satan himself.

The attitude of the pulpit, the press and the public in those years may be gleaned from an after notice in the *Massachusetts Spy* in 1832, following the appearance of a circus in Wooster: "It is with no little surprise and regret that the good people of our quiet village learnt, a few days since, that the Selectmen had licensed a company of strolling actors, calling themselves Circus Riders, to exhibit their fooleries here. We presume that in giving their consent the Selectmen had no idea of encouraging vice and dissipation, or of acting in opposition to the known wishes of the majority of their constituents; but we have no doubt a very large majority of our citizens are very definitely opposed to exhibitions of the kind in question. Who does not know that no one gets any good by attending such exhibitions? - that by going there he encourages idleness, cruelty and vice? Some of our inhabitants residing in the vicinity of the Circus have been loud in their complaints of the noise and revelry for a few nights past. It is hoped that this is the last time we shall be troubled with such unwelcome visitors, and that our Selectmen will in the future be careful not to lend their aid in encouraging them to come among us."

Among circus owners in those far-away days were a few that were astute enough to recognize that since menageries were accepted by the molders of public opinion it would be wise to combine such with their less favored "Circus Riders." At first the ducat holders were exhorted by the town's elders to see the menagerie but to then turn their backs on the wicked performance in the farther tent and so to return to their homes undefiled. But history records that more than one elder was discovered to first take a peek at the forbidden glamour and then to venture to sit out an entire show. It was in the very nature of human progress that menagerie and circuses came to be looked upon as

one institution and the public came to be more avid in their curiosity to first examine and then to enjoy both.

It appears that the first musical instrument to be used in a church in this country was the organ. The introduction of organ music in the church was the opening wedge for the eventual acceptance of instrumental music in theaters, concert halls, and circuses.

As early as 1767 it was announced that a concert would be given in New York by the Royal American Band of Music. In 1771 an announcement in a Philadelphia paper stated that a concert would be given by a ". . . full band of music, with trumpets, kettledrums, and every instrument that can be introduced with propriety." In that same year the worthy citizens of Boston were afforded the opportunity to hear music provided by the sixty-fourth Regimental Band. Near the close of the 18th century theaters generally had engaged orchestras.

Because British Regimental bands had suggested music of a more ambitious character than the fifes and drums of the Colonists American Military bands came into existence during the Revolutionary War. Even in its early days the United States Military Academy at West Point had one of the best bands in this country. This band had an instrumentation of five clarinets, two flutes, two horns, bassoon, trumpet, trombone, bugle and drum. The United States Marine Band was founded in 1798 with fifes and drums and has a long and proud history.

Social thought and customs among the Colonists were dominated by English influences, so it was quite natural that both music and the circus came to us by way of England. By the time of the American Revolution England rated favorably with other countries in the field of band music.

Josiah Flagg, with considerable experience as a musician, composer and director, founded a band in Boston in 1773 with a roster of fifty. It gave a number of concerts in Faneuil Hall. At that time, however, the singing of hymns in the churches was the only acceptable music. Fiddles, flutes and horns were the instruments of Satan, and no use for Josiah to try to make them his. This prejudice against instrumental music in the Colonies continued for 150 years.

As with the circus, however, little by little these walls of prejudice were stormed and slowly they crumbled and fell. Ten years after Flagg's efforts to present instrumental concerts in Boston another band was organized in this citadel of culture, — the Boston Brigade Band. It may have been aided in its struggle for popular acceptance by the happy chance to play on a most unhappy occasion, — the double funeral of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, both of whom departed this earthly life on the birth date of the country they had served as presidents, — July 4, 1826. The playing of appropriate music on this solemn occasion deeply impressed the public and seems to have



Clown bands were a part of all the larger circuses at the turn of the century. This ten piece group on the John Robinson 10 Big Shows had the leader dressed as John Philip Sousa.

helped to overcome the prejudice that had existed against bands.

James Kendall, a brother of the great circus band director and bugle player, Edward "Ned" Kendall, was at one time the conductor of the Boston Brigade Band. The famous bandmaster, Patrick S. Gilmore, became the director of this band in 1859 and shortly thereafter made it his own. A roll call of the musicians who played in this band at various times would include such names as Herbert L. Clarke, Jules Levy, E. A. Lefebre, Frederick Neil Innes, Walter Emmerson, Ben Bent, Allessandro Liberati, Thomas Preston Brooks, Michael Raffayolo and Matthew Arbuckle.

Patrick Gilmore may be considered the father of the big business concert band in this country. He was followed by bands organized by such famous directors as Sousa, Kryl, Conway, Innes, Liberati, Pryor, Creatore and a host of others.

A Frenchman, Antione Jullien, is conceded to be the stellar showman of the concert band field. He was an eccentric conductor but possessed the knowledge of the public's taste that made him the Barnum of the concert band world. Both have been characterized as humbugs, but it must be acknowledged that both men were of outstanding abilities and rare gifts.

Fate decreed that the master showman of all time should be born in that section of the country and at the time when both music and the circus were struggling against prejudice and ignorance. Phineas T. Barnum was born at Bethel, Connecticut on July 5, 1810. It is not too difficult to believe that given the power Barnum would have decreed that his birth date should not coincide with that of his country for in his entire life he sought

always to be different, never to be one of the herd. Surely though not even Barnum could have foreseen that the almost equally famous partner of his latter years, James A. Bailey, was to be content to be born on the Fourth of July. Bailey was always the less aggressive of the two.

Fate likewise decreed that the ticket seller of the Aaron Turner Circus should be elected to stand in the ring in Westfield, Connecticut in April, 1836 to make an apology to the cash customers that the band had failed to arrive in time for that seasons opening performance. The fact that that ticket seller was also the secretary and treasurer of the Circus and the recipient of twenty-five per cent, of its profits may somewhat have influenced the selection of Barnum on this occasion. Be that as it may, it was this same Barnum that many years later brought to this country the Swedish Nightingale, Jenny Lind, thereby making a fortune for the singer and quite a spot of cash for himself.

Of greater interest, however, is the fact that in later years there was to emerge from the bands of the great Barnum and Bailey Circus virtually all of the great composers of circus music, — Karl L. King, Russell Alexander, Frederick Alton Jewell, Walter P. English, Charles E. Duble, J. J. Richards and Charles Sanglear. Of these, King, Jewell, English and Richards were destined to have their own circus bands, and Alexander was to become a member of that outstanding musical unit, the Exposition Four, that won the plaudits of the vaudeville circuits.

It is believed that music first became a part of the circus in 1768. In that year in England Philip Astley laid out a ring enclosed by a rope and stakes on an open piece of ground. In this ring he rode two horses. The music was provided by two fifers and Astley's wife, who beat on a bass drum. This "band" was mounted on a small platform in the center of the ring.

"In 1782 in England it was considered immoral to provide music for acts. Hughes and Astley, who at that time were famous



This twelve piece band appeared with one of the four Gentry Bros. Circus units in 1904.

for their feats of horsemanship, were committed to the Bridewell for their contempt of Magistry for having introduced music for their Royal Circus and Equestrian Academy in defiance of law.

"Some years later when Philip Astley was providing much better music to accompany his circus acts, he looked back with regret to the early days when 'music' was nothing more than what a few fifes and drums could provide. Nevertheless he held circus riders in higher esteem than musicians. 'Any fool,' he would say, 'can play a fiddle, but it takes a man to manage a horse, and yet I have to pay a fellow that plays upon a fiddle as much as a man who rides upon three horses.'

"The United Colonies in America got their first full-blown circus in the summer of 1775 when Thomas Pool presented equestrian feats in Philadelphia. The music was provided by no more than two or three players. When Pool presented his show in New York in 1797, the ladies and gentlemen in the audience were entertained by music and a clown between feats of horsemanship.

"In Colonial days a citizen of New York remembered that the first feats horsemanship he witnessed were done to the accompaniment of a tambourine, which was later replaced by a 'band' of three drummers, a trumpeter, and two fifers.

"By 1820 there were probably thirty small circuses touring what was then the United States. These were insignificant shows with two or three wagons, perhaps four horses, a half dozen performers, and a clown. There was no band save a fiddle or two, no lady in tulle and spangles, no ringmaster and no tent. The place of exhibition was open to the sun and rain. There were no seats except such as could be borrowed for the ladies in the audience. A crowd of 250 people at twenty-five cents apiece was considered tremendous business."*

Year by year, as the population of the country increased, roads were improved and lighting facilities perfected, circuses grew in size. Bigger and better circuses meant bigger and better bands. Eventually the free street parade was born and with



In 1907 R. W. Baker had 23 men in the band of the Gollmar Bros. Circus.

the advent of these, as we have seen, the need of musicians increased.

In the early days there were not many musicians who were proficient on brass instruments. Therefore circus bands used for the performance were comprised of strings and some brass. At times these bands were almost entirely composed of clarinets.

The Golden Age of the circus coincided with the Golden Era of the concert band. During this period there was a dearth of competent musicians in this country with the result that a great many were encouraged to come in from Germany and Italy. Not all of these were assimilated by the American concert bands. There were many Italian concert bands touring our country. Carnivals competed with circuses for the services of musicians, and Italian bands flourished in this field of entertainment. Not a few of the larger circuses, such as the John Robinson Show and the Pawnee Bill Wild West, used Italian bands exclusively. Like wise Italian musicians furnished the perfect tempo and showmanship for the circus side shows. Later these yielded largely to negro bands. Too, all girl bands found favor for side shows and atop band wagons in the extravagant street parades.

Fred Jewell and his 32 piece band are pictured here in the backyard of the Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth in 1909.

For many years people living in the smaller communities and in the rural areas had no opportunity to enjoy band music except as a circus or minstrel show played their town. The big name concert bands, such as those of Gilmore, Sousa, and Liberati, gave their performances in metropolitan centers. Some of the eastern cities, such as New York, Boston, and Allentown, had their own bands, but this was not generally true of the western section of the country. Later music found its way into the public schools, and in some instances spirited citizens provided their communities with local brass bands. In some sections of the western part of the country an army band might be heard. But for many years it was the circus that gave to people everywhere their richest holiday.

Circus day was the only opportunity millions of Americans had to see skilled performers, wild animals, side show oddities, "million dollar" street parades, and to hear the bands every circus carried. Beginning as modest parades with a few rather simple floats, a few menagerie animals in rude cages or walking, and a band wagon or two, these evolved into the extravaganzas a mile or more in length, aglitter with spangles and rhinestones, and boasting a variety of bands mounted on elaborate wagons of many colors. These bands, whether playing during the



parade or later in the day on ballyhoo stand or beneath the big top, literally filled the air with music, - music which inspired many a youngster to study and practice on an instrument that he might become a member of the school or local band and, mayhap, of a glamorous circus band some day. The music of these circus bands lingered long in the memories of young and old.

The earliest music of the army or militia of this country was provided by the fife and drums. Such music was considered a morale builder for the men who fought in the Revolutionary War. In 1792 Congress provided for the organizing of bands other than those composed of fifes and drums. Four decades later, in 1834, army regulations provided for a specific number of musicians for regiments and for artillery.

It was not until 1810 that the first band made its appearance in New York City, and another fifteen years passed before a professional band was organized in this metropolis. A quarter of a century later this city could boast of some fifteen or twenty brass bands.

In the early 1800's it was difficult to organize bands of either amateur or professional status, for musicians capable of handling band instruments were scarce and often not well trained. The instruments themselves were crude and it was not until about 1850 that there began to be any definite improvement in these. Too, there was a paucity of band music in early days. It was much later before competent composers were to add to the libraries of brass bands. When brass bands were first organized they were comprised of Eb and Bb cornets, Eb clarinets, horns, tenors, baritones, basses, drums and cymbals, or some combination of these.

The circus performer had less difficulty procuring the "props" necessary to his act than did the musician procuring an adequate instrument in these early days. Horses and saddles, ropes and wire essential to the work of equestrian or wire-walker were easier to come by than were the cornets and clarinets, the drums and cymbals of circus musicians. Thus we find the circus performer perfecting himself and his art earlier than we find the truly proficient circus musician.

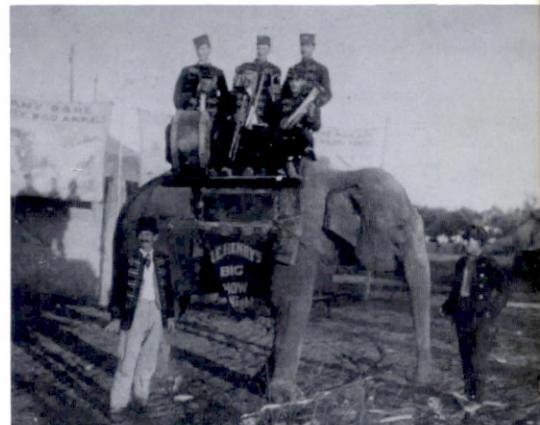
In 1771, while yet the musicians had but fife and drums, John Sharp of Salem, Massachusetts stood with one foot on the saddle of each of two horses galloping around the ring at full speed. He then did something of a "split" as his two horses drew apart sufficiently to permit a third horse to join them in their gallop round and round. Sharp also mounted and dismounted from a horse running pell mell around the ring. In that same year a Mr. Foulks, in New York, played a French horn while standing on a saddle as his horse raced around the ring. Another of Foulks' feats was to stand in the stirrups as his horse galloped within the ring and then to jump free and stand atop the saddle, the horse never slackening his speed. This horseman while riding three horses

around the ring would vault from one horse to another. Likewise he would vault from the ground completely over a fast-running horse. It was such equestrian feats as these that lured the elders to slip through the menagerie into the den of wickedness just to take a peek and then to be enticed to remain for a full performance.

Nine years later The American circus acquired a new and quite enchanting act, — the slack wire walker. Congress had actually enacted a law that sought to prohibit theatrical or circus entertainment, and its members were to learn what so many of their successors have had to learn since; namely, that such "evils" are not to be legislated into nonexistence. When in 1780 a Mr. Templeton balanced himself on a slack wire people crowded to see him, paying \$15.00 to \$40.00 each in Continental currency for the privilege. Small wonder that the city fathers chose to ignore the act of Congress the while they relished the act of the slack wire artist. Five years later in New York M. Alex Placide tumbled and danced on a slack wire, quite out-doing Mr. Templeton's simple feat of maintaining his balance as the wire swayed. A scant two years later one John Brenon performed a yet more intricate slack wire routine. The while he balanced himself on the swaying wire he also balanced a straw on a slender pipe, balanced a sword on the edge of a wine glass, jumped through a hoop, and finally beat a drum as he walked across the slack wire. John Brenon apparently harbored the urge to excel in his work, for in 1789 he was doing a tumbling routine on the slack wire in addition to his earlier repertoire.

The while musicians continued apparently content with their fife and drum "bands", the aristocrats of the circus performers, the equestrians, continued to improve upon their art. In 1785 a Mr. Pool stood in the stirrups and leaped over a bar as his horse raced madly around the ring. Standing on the saddle this man tossed oranges into the air and caught these on the end of a spear he held in his other hand.

It is interesting to note that America's first president, himself a superlative horseman, liked to ride with circus owner and performer, Mr. Ricketts. Pres. Washington also enjoyed attending the Rickett's Circus and there watching a horse named Cornplanter jump over another horse. Mr. Ricketts was not alone an accomplished horseman but an acrobat of no mean talents. It is recorded that he somersaulted over thirty men and hurtled in a somersault over five men mounted on as many horses. He would ride two horses in a Roman standing position and jump banners held twelve feet high above the ground. Another of his stunts was to ride with one foot on each of two mugs, one mug atop each of two saddles. Then to really startle his audience Ricketts would mount a horse racing at breakneck speed around the ring and there place his head



An unusual band was the six piece unit on the J. E. Henry Wagon Show in 1913. The group led by Mack Waldren made the parade all on the elephant "Gyp."

on a pint mug on the saddle and with his feet held perpendicularly above him proceed to ride standing on his head.

Somersaults from the ground made their appearance in Boston in 1880 when a Mr. Leopold leaped through a hoop of fire at a height of fourteen feet above the ground. Leopold also hurtled in a somersault over the heads of twenty soldiers holding guns with fixed bayonets.

In 1881 an elephant was brought into a circus ring to serve as a platform on which men could perform. This same year witnessed the first time a performer walked a long cable pitched at a steep angle to a platform above. A Madame Cossin performed this same trick in this same year in a theatre, climbing from the stage to a gallery above.

In 1797 we find the first record of a troupe of Arab acrobats in a routine that was to become a part of the classic repertoire of these peoples from the Near East and of their cousins, the Moroccans. This first troupe built a human pyramid wherein the weight of the entire group was supported by a single member. This was billed as "The Pyramid of Egypt," and no doubt whetted the increasing appetite of Americans for circus performances.

Jack LaPearl was a member of the 10 piece clown band that appeared with the Downie Bros. Circus in 1927.





In the 1930s even the smaller truck shows carried fair sized bands. This eight member unit appeared with the Bud Hawkins Circus in 1936.

If the equestrians were to retain their rank as the aristocrats of Circusdom, it behooved them to adapt to their use the somersaults the acrobats were perfecting. Long and arduous hours of practice must have gone into the process, for by the middle of the nineteenth century riders were routinely employing the somersault in various versions on and from the backs of speeding horses.

We find the first record of a ballet on stilts in 1820.

The menagerie was as simple in its beginnings as the circus. The first known wild animal brought to this country for exhibition purposes was a lion in 1716. He was shown in the home of the owner for a small admission fee. Nearly two decades later, in 1733, the first white bear was exhibited for a fee. Half a century later we find an orang-utan and a tiger imported for exhibition purposes, and in 1791 the first camel. The year 1793 witnessed the arrival of the first panther to be used as a menagerie beast. Three years later that perennial delight of children everywhere, the elephant, first landed on America's shores. Just thirty years later citizens of the eastern part of our country saw their first rhinoceros, and in 1837 that strange, eternally silent creature, the giraffe.

In the 1830's Ike Amburgh gave circus goers probably the biggest thrill they had yet known. This intrepid individual actually dared to enter a cage of wild animals, — a cage that was a far cry from the later steel arena but one wholly adequate for its place in the evolution of the American circus. The "blood sweating Behemoth of Holy Writ," the hippopotamus, made his first appearance in the annals of circus history during the 1850's.

During the decades when circus performers were slowly perfecting their art and the menagerie was growing from a single animal show in homes, taverns, or court yards to the aggregation of animals which came to be known as a circus menagerie, the bandsmen were also working to

perfect the instruments, the techniques, and the music of their profession. By the middle of the nineteenth century these three had become established as integral parts of the American circus. A few of these early circuses had developed rather primitive side shows with freaks chiefly gleaned from those farmers who chanced to possess two-headed calves, five-legged ponies, one-legged chickens and the like. As these annexes to the circus proper caught the popular fancy, they, too, were further developed by the more enterprising among circus owners and managers.

There remained the after-show or concert to complete the circus as it was known to millions during the late 1800's and the early 1900's. It appears that this division of the American circus had its birth in 1862 in Oil City, Pennsylvania, then and for many years after the capital of the oil industry. In those days the minstrel shows engaged bands to parade through the business section of the city or town in which they were showing as a means of advertising their presence. In 1861 one Hugh Coyle was a drummer in such a band when he was offered the opportunity to play with a circus the following year. Coyle could scarce believe his ears when an old clown, Mr. Dan Gardner, asked the drummer to join out for the 1862 season with the Gardner and Hemming's Great American Circus, for to him touring with a circus had always held the aura of the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. The Gardner and Hemming's Circus was what is known as a mud-wagon show, for at that time there were no railroads through a part of the country it traversed. In fact it often traveled over wagon routes that were scarcely discernible trails or over roads that knew the deep dust of droughts and the hub-deep mud of rains. Not infrequently their few wagons and animals trudged over corduroy roads, and always the stench of crude oil permeated the air.

During the circus parade in Oil City, Hugh Coyle, beating on his drum, chanced to see acquaintances of his sitting on a veranda. He recognized Lew Simmons and "Tip" Talbott, both minstrels, and after the parade Coyle returned to the



Another unusual circus band was the all-midget thirty piece group on the short lived Stanley Graham International Midget Circus in 1937. The show lasted two weeks.

house where he had seen them watching the parade. As the three sat chatting about their minstrel show experiences, Mr. Gardner approached and recognized Lew Simmons. It developed that Simmons and Talbott had been left stranded when their show folded and had decided to await the coming of the Gardner and Hemming's Circus in the hope that they might find employment with it. Gardner expressed a willingness to employ them but explained that both his band and his side show had a full complement of men and he could think of no opening for them just then. At this Coyle hazarded the suggestion, "Why not in the big ring in the circus tent after each performance?"* The result was almost electric, and there followed a discussion as to what such an innovation should be called. Many titles were considered and rejected. Then Lew Simmons uttered the word "concert." It was a "natural," and the two stranded minstrel men were engaged for what was the first after-show or concert in an American circus.

Lew Simmons sang as he strummed a banjo; Talbott did a monologue; Dan Gardner, the old clown, blacked his face and dressed as a wench, and his two young daughters, Eliza and Louise, did a sister song and dance act. Four of the circus musicians furnished the music for this new circus feature. An admission fee of twenty-five cents was charged, and to the immense surprise and keen delight of the circus owners a large portion of the audience at the regular performance remained for this after-show.

With the addition of the after show concert the circus was complete as we had known it for many years.

**The Rise and Fall of Circus Bands.*
Sverre O. Braathen; *The Instrumentalist*, October 1957; Vol. XII, No. 2, p. 40 ff.

**The Billboard*, April 28, 1906; p. 32

MILLER-AYERS SHOWS OF SHEBOYGAN, WISCONSIN

By Norman H. Wilbert

The hopes and dreams of Alvin Miller became a reality in 1924, when he took his newly organized Miller-Ayers Shows on the road, through the state of Wisconsin.

This little known circus unfortunately has not been covered in any news reports for 50 years and was almost lost in the passing of time. No doubt this article will come as a surprise to many citizens of Sheboygan County and we are pleased to relate the history of the Miller-Ayers circus for the records. We are grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Miller for supplying the required history and photographs.

From early childhood Alvin had envisioned owning a circus of his own and in 1924, after many years of longing, he finally achieved the goal he was seeking. Alvin was born in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, on October 30, 1897 and still resides with his wife at 2206 South Ninth Street. He seriously began practicing different circus acts at the age of 12. From 1909-1921 he mastered various acts, such as loop walking, ladderbalancing and juggling on the single trapeze. He trained at a Club House on south Eighth Street, Sheboygan, which presently is occupied by Peltok's Tavern. Later he trained at the Lindermann lot located on South 14th St.

During the 1917-20 years Alvin set up a bratwurst stand when carnivals and circuses were booked in Sheboygan. In addition he sponsored dances at the Standard Hall on Indiana and 13th Streets. Billy Marquardt and his orchestra provided the music and at intermission Alvin presented four acts of entertainment. The worthwhile dividends were set aside to purchase a tent and other necessary equipment and riggings for his dream circus.

In 1921 Mr. Miller toured with the famous Lindemann Bros. Circus and became enhanced with the desire of having his own circus. Following the 1921 season he busied himself formulating plans for such an endeavor and his efforts were directed in organizing his own circus. Good fortune was on his side, for his uncle Elisha Ayers was also interested in such a venture and he provided additional funds necessary to purchase a 50x80' tent, five Ford trucks, a Kohler light plant, a calliope at a cost of \$725.00 and other needed equipment. Thus a new circus was destined to be added to the long list of about 75 Wisconsin circuses. In May 1924 ownership of the Miller-Ayers Shows fulfilled a long standing ambition of Mr. Miller. During the 1922-23 years many hours and days were spent in acquiring the needed performers and getting the various acts ready for the road.

On September 22, 1923, Alvin married Miss Helen Meier. This marriage was blessed with two sons, LeRoy, 2223 South Seventh Street, and Ronald, 507 Center Lane, Kohler. Alvin's wife became an accomplished performer in her own right and was adept on the swinging ladder. During one performance a serious accident occurred, which almost claimed her life. On another occasion a slip on the swinging ladder caused Mrs. Miller to fall in the lap of a male spectator, luckily neither was hurt. Alvin and Helen were billed as the "Aerial Millers".

This fine photo shows the Miller-Ayers Show on the lot in Northern Wisconsin during the 1924 season. The big top was an 80 with a 50 foot middle. All illustrations are from Alvin Miller.

THE BIG DAY

The big day was rapidly approaching and the one ring circus was ready to hit the road in May 1924. Their entire complement included five trucks, the big top, cook tent, two ponies and five dogs. The Miller-Ayers Shows personnel of 12 people took care of the various acts, setting up tents, driving trucks, and the two house wives did all the cooking. Mr. Harry McKinstry was the advance man for the 1924 season.

1924 ITINERARY

According to Mr. Miller, his circus left Sheboygan in the middle of May 1924 and some of the cities included in the itinerary were: Pulaski, Bonduel, Marion, Tigerton, Wittenberg, Mattoon, Thorp, Boyd, Bangor, Reedsburg, Portage, Mosinee, Hillsboro, Kiel, New Holstein, Valders, Hilbert, Michicot, Maribel, Denmark, Casco, Duck Creek, Gillette, Lena, Peshtigo, Coleman and other small cities in Wisconsin. They gave many isolated districts the rare opportunity to see a circus. They presented one performance a day and it is estimated a total of 150 performances attracted 45,000 circus fans. The adult's admission price was 55%, children 25%. The big top seated 500 people.

Before leaving Sheboygan the Miller-Ayers Shows played on a vacant lot between 10th and 11th streets, where the present Farnsworth High School is located.

The program included:

Opening Act-Trained Ponies-Trainer and Ringmaster, George Miller





Double Trapeze-Alvin and Helen Miller

Single Trapeze, Loop Walking and Revolving Ladder-Alvin Miller
Butterfly Act (Iron Jaw)-Mrs. George Miller

Educated Dogs-George Miller
Up-side down loop Walk-Alvin Miller
Swinging Ladder-Mrs. Alvin Miller
Clown Acts-Harold Klujeske and Emil Miller

A calliope provided the music for the entire show.

Mr. Miller stated in our interview the 1924 season was successful and profitable but in spite of necessary precautions some mishaps did occur. Fortunately, none were of a serious nature. The circus usually traveled 15 to 25 miles per day, depending upon road conditions and as was the case so often, muddy, rutty and dusty roads caused many problems. On several occasions it was necessary to call on a farmer to assist in hauling the Ford Model "T" trucks out of the mud. Mr. Miller related, the truck he and his wife were driving tipped over into a ditch, due

Performers and visitors posed in front of the ticket wagon in 1924. Standing are George Miller, Mrs. Emil Miller, Mrs. Lester Miller, Alvin Miller, Mrs. Herman Miller, Herman Miller and Elisha Miller. Seated are clown Emil Miller, Mrs. George Miller, Mrs. Alvin Miller, Lester Miller and clown Harold (Happy) Klujeski, all but Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Miller are deceased.

to loose gravel, and a bent radius rod contributed to the accident. Fortunately they were not seriously injured. They also were fortunate to have brother Emil service the Ford trucks during the 1924 season. The circus returned to Sheboygan in October 1924. During the winter of 1924-25 the Millers decided to house the circus animals and paraphernalia in their uncle

The performers posed in the big top during the 1924 season. Left to right are Elisha Ayers, Harry Ayers, Emil Miller, Elmer Miller, Alvin Miller, Howard Miller, George Miller, Joseph Ayers, Mrs. Alvin Miller, kneeling in front are Harold Klujeski and Henry Richter.

Elisha Ayer's barn. Elisha toured with the Miller Circus in 1924. He died in April 1959 at the age of 83.

After careful deliberation the decision was made to unite the Miller-Ayers Show with the DeKreko Bros. Shows, who had winterquarters at Chicago, Illinois. In the spring of 1925 a portion of the Miller-Ayers Circus belongings were sold.

1925 SEASON

Harry McKinstry, advance man for the 1924 season, was in a large measure responsible in having the Millers join the DeKreko Bros. Shows in 1925. Although they joined the DeKreko Bros. 25-railroad car show, they still performed in the same big top they used in 1924. They also presented the same acts as they did in the previous season, using their own equipment. Mr. Emil Miller, brother of Alvin, joined the circus and served as a roustabout and did clown acts. He died in 1971 at the age of 66.

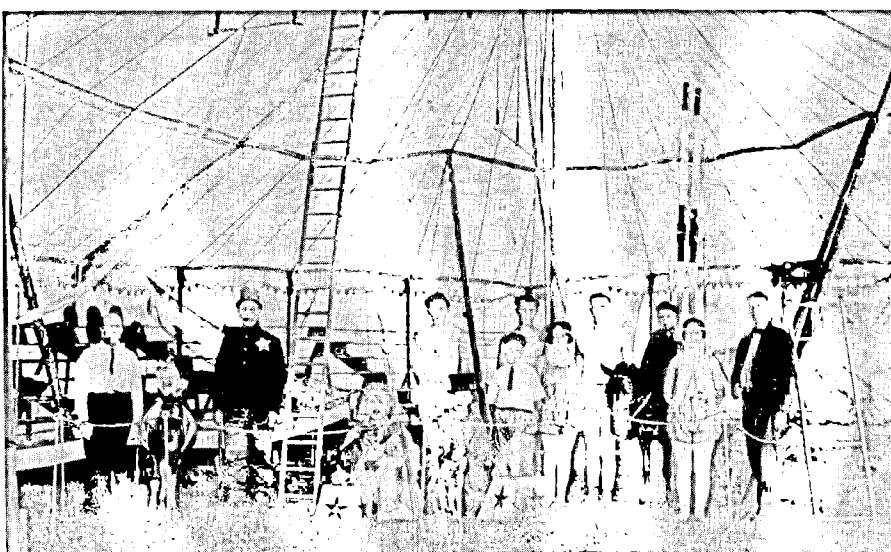


The only surviving members of the Miller-Ayers Show, Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Miller are shown in the back yard in 1924.

After several trucks delivered their equipment to Chicago, the show went on the road for six months, their itinerary taking them thru five mid-central states. It was an unusually demanding season and on many occasions they presented three or four performances a day.

On one occasion during their 1925 trek, one of the flat cars caught fire, but the damage was slight. At one performance Alvin fell from a swinging trapeze chair, but without serious effect, and as a good trouper, was back for the next performance. During the 1925 winter season Alvin worked for the Leverenz Show Co.

Another performer from Sheboygan was Mr. Jess Kemmer, who was a clever contortionist.





This truck carried the air calliope during the 1924 season.

1926 SEASON

In the spring of 1926 the circus fever again plagued Alvin and he decided to take another whirl at circus life. He scrutinized the Billboard Circus magazine and noticed an advertisement by the LaMont Bros. motorized 2-ring circus, which was quartered at Salem, Illinois. They had scheduled a mid-southern states itinerary. The show included sensational aerial acts, a six-piece band and calliope. Mr. Miller wrote the owner, Mr. C. R. LaMont, and shortly thereafter signed a contract with his show, which was billed as one of the greatest motorized circuses of that season.

In 1926 the Millers performed their regular acts with their own equipment and riggings. At the opening performance, Mrs. Miller had the misfortune of falling from the trapeze and was unable to perform for a month. Their itinerary route, from April thru November, included many mid-western States, also as far south as Texas. It was a good year financially for the Miller aerialists and for the LaMont Circus. Miserable weather conditions and muddy roads caused the usual

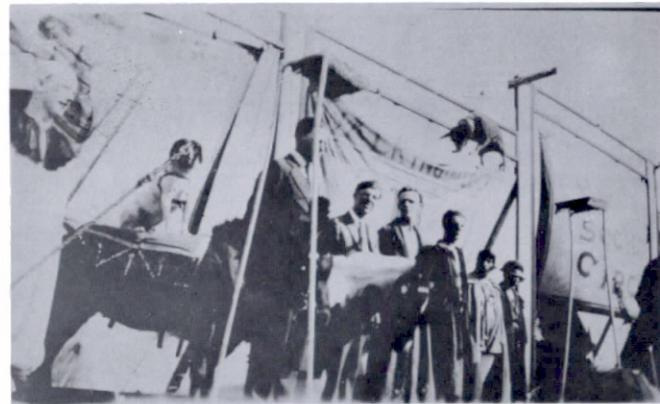
Harry McKinstry, former advance man for the 1924 circus is shown with ponies in front of a DeKreko carnival wagon in 1925.

problems and delays. The performers had their difficulties in keeping their wardrobes (leotards and canvas shoes) clean and dry. It was not unusual to change completely between acts. Mrs. Miller, was of necessity a good seamstress and designed many of her own costumes. Many valuable suggestions were given to her by some relatives who had circus connections. After the LaMont circus returned to winter quarters, the Millers returned to Sheboygan and prepared for the 1927 season. They continued perfecting their acts in Harry Martin's barn, located on Kentucky Avenue.

1927 SEASON

In 1927 Mr. and Mrs. Miller again joined the LaMont Shows, this time in Laredo, Texas. The Circus traveled in 25 trucks and toured the mid-west States. An eight piece band was featured for this season. The Millers did a swing ring act in addition to their regular acts. Good fortune prevailed and after the season was completed they decided to settle down and give up circus life. The years had slipped by and Alvin sought stability of employment at the Leverenz Shoe Company, Sheboygan, where he continued to work for 35 years, retiring in 1963 at age 65.

Today Mr. Miller is still active at the age of 74. He tries to attend all circuses in the Sheboygan area and has collected programs for many years. He and his wife



In 1925 the Millers were with the DeKreko Shows, a 25 car railroad carnival. The midway show was called Miller's Society Circus. Shown in front third from left is Alvin Miller, Mrs. Miller is fifth from left.

will always be circus fans and are ready to talk circus at anytime. This congenial couple loves to relive circus life and reminisce about the happy days they experienced. Hardships, yes, but many happy days and the realization of a dream come true shall always be a fond memory.

BOB DOVER PROMOTED

Robert Dover, a veteran of 29 years with the Ringling-Barnum Circus, has been appointed Associate Director of the Red Unit while undertaking new responsibilities with both the Red and Blue units.

In his new position Dover will work closely with director Dick Barstow and Irvin Feld, the producer. The 103rd season of the Greatest Show on Earth opens in Venice on January 5, 1973.

During the 1926 and 1927 seasons the Millers were with the La Mont Bros. Circus. This photo shows the La Mont band in 1926.



RINGLING MUSEUM OF THE CIRCUS

OF THE

JOHN AND MABLE RINGLING MUSEUM OF ART

IN SARASOTA!

SENDS

Season's Greetings

TO ALL
CIRCUS FANS AND FRIENDS



REINDEER FROM THE MUSEUM'S
COLLECTION OF CAROUSEL FIGURES.

COME SEE US IN SUNNY SARASOTA!

THE GREAT CIRCUS TRAIN LIQUOR RAID

By John M. Staley

The performer's roster of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Combined Shows in 1928 included many of the top names in the circus world, among them Lillian Leizel, Luicita Leers, Con Colleano, the Wallendas, the Rieffenach Riding troupe, the Yaccopis, and the Flying Codonas. It cannot be said that any of these famous circus personalities definitely were a part of the story we are about to unfold, but who knows they might have been, after all they too were human.

The 1928 tour opened in Madison Square Garden on April 5 and closed in Sarasota, Florida with the final performance on October 27. The show ventured out of the borders of the United States for but one stand that season. After showing Portland, Maine on June 23 the show took a day to get to the single Canadian stand of the season, Montreal, Quebec, June 25 and 26.

A large number of the performers had come from Europe, where they had been raised with wine on the table at meal time, many enjoyed the luxury of a bottle of fine champagne on special occasions. Others longed for a bottle of beer or a fine old scotch highball.

But the performers were not the only employees of the Greatest Show on Earth who had been denied satisfaction of their thirst by the Volstead Act, forbidding the sale of alcoholic beverages in the United States. The two day stand in Canada became a veritable child's visit to candyland for the entire show.

The show had just been paid when its 1800 employees found themselves in a place untouched by America's prohibition, and they loaded up, buying everything available, completely clearing the shelf stock of one liquor store near the show-grounds. All had but one thought, that of building their own private stock, and perhaps having a little left over for sale at a good "bootleg" price back in the States.

Later it was estimated that over 20,000 bottles of the contraband beer, wine and liquor, valued at \$35,000, were "stashed" in every conceivable place on the train. I know of one man on the train crew that alone brought over 500 quart bottles of Black Horse Ale, which he held until Chicago, played June 14 to 22, he sold it at a premium to circus employees until it was gone. He had stacked the ale in the sills of the stock cars. Some of the animal men hid their liquor in the two seal cages. When the train was enroute a frame was fitted over the tank in the floor of the cages. Some of the porters cut the foot locker drawers under the berths in half, so that when they were pulled out for inspection they looked okay. Others wrapped their liquor in side wall or in the

chaffing bags used to hold sections of canvas or small tents.

Some liquors were brought in the animal meat wagon and also in the meat locker in the cook house, placing the bottles between quarters of beef. One man had the bright idea of taking some ten gallon milk cans, filling them two thirds full with booze and pouring either bacon or sausage grease on top. These were the clever ones who smuggled their booty past the inspectors. The show moved out of Montreal for the next town, Ogdensburg, New York on June 27. But the circus fans of Ogdensburg were to have a long wait until a performance was given in their city.

"CIRCUS WAS DELAYED AT THE BORDER", read the headline of the lead article that appeared in the July 1, 1928 issue of the Ogdensburg Advance and St. Lawrence Sunday Democrat. "Gave but one performance here — search of cars yielded 20,000 bottles of liquor." The full article read as follows. "The Volstead Act came close to knocking out the great Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus here Wednesday. Custom officials heard the troupers were stocking up before

Lillian Leitzel and Alfredo Codona, the queen and king of the circus were features in 1928. There are no records to indicate what Canadian purchases may have been found in their compartments in the fourth section. Circus World Museum Atwell Photo.



leaving Montreal to recross the border and a big force of agents was on hand to search the trains when they passed the border at Malone. The four sections were held there while the officers made an inspection of the cars. Two of the sections were searched after they reached this city and a big haul was secured, it was said.

Collector Tulloch stated that altogether about 20,000 bottles of contraband were seized on the four sections. As a result of delays the trains failed to reach here in time to stage the afternoon show and the last train did not arrive until 9:30 PM. The night show started at 10:30 and ended about 1:30 AM.

No arrests were made in connection with the seizures, but penalties of \$5 a bottle were imposed when the liquor was found in the personal possession of the circus people.

Customs men denied reports that diamonds, narcotics, fur coats and other dutiable goods were seized, saying the search revealed only liquor and beer.

Thousands of people were disappointed by the cancellation of the afternoon show and it cost the circus \$15,000. Money was refunded to all who applied both afternoon and night.

The circus management offered no public explanation of the incident and the people as a whole took the situation good naturedly although many who came long distances to see the afternoon show were bitter in their criticism.

The people who attended the night performance said it was one of the greatest shows they ever beheld. The circus left here early Thursday morning for Watertown. Many Ogdensburg people motored to the Garland City Thursday to see the show."

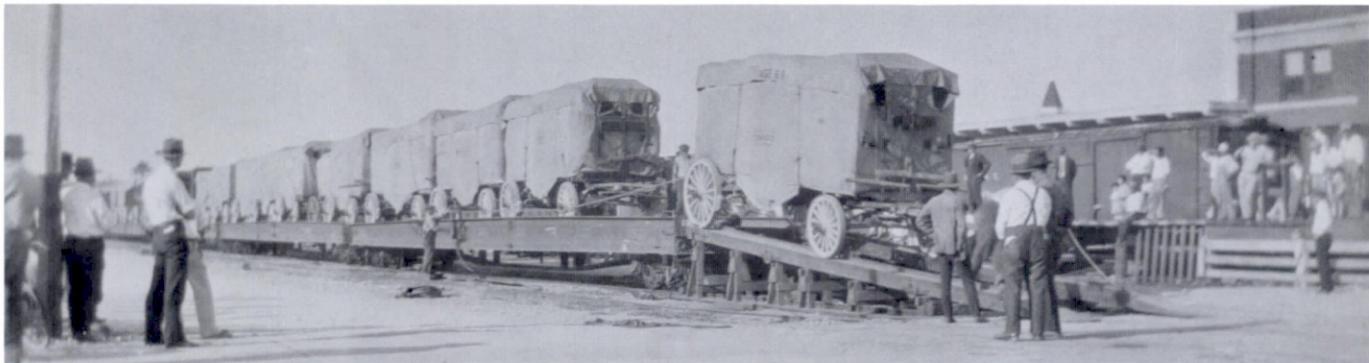
CUSTOMS NOT AT FAULT

"Collector Tulloch issued the following statement in connection with the affair. 'Some wild rumors have been circulated as to the delays occasioned by the Customs Department in bringing in the several trains at Malone, and it is due the public to give them a statement as to just the time used for clearing these sections, and the time occupied by each section in reaching Ogdensburg from Malone.'

Section number one arrived at Malone at 3:30 the morning of June 27th. Departed from Malone at 4:35, was inspected and cleared in an hour and 5 minutes by the United States Customs.

The second section arrived in Malone at 9:10 in the morning and departed at 9:23, and was cleared and inspected in 13 minutes.

The third section arrived in Malone at



9:50 AM and departed at 10:48, being inspected and cleared by Customs in 58 minutes.

The fourth section arrived in Malone at 10:30 in the morning and departed at 4:45. Being inspected and cleared in six hours and 15 minutes by the United States Customs.

The whole force of Malone, the whole of the Border Patrol, the Marshall's Force and others were called in to expedite matters. Men worked from early morning until late at night, without stopping for meals. Two men were sent to Montreal to expedite matters and had it not been for the most flagrant violations of the law, which resulted in the seizure of large quantities of liquor in the fourth section, the fourth section would not have been delayed any longer than the other sections.

The speed of the circus trains is limited at 25 miles an hour on the New York Central and Rutland trackage. The first section arrived in Ogdensburg at 8:45 taking four hours and 10 minutes from Malone. The second section arrived at 8:45 taking five hours and 17 minutes. The third section arrived in Ogdensburg at 4:15 PM taking five hours and 17 minutes. The fourth section arrived in Ogdensburg at 9:25 PM taking four hours and 40 minutes.

There were 1,531 people in the show and a great many of the crowd were in the

The horse cars were reported to have provided smuggling space equal to the rest of the train. This fine baggage horses shot from Circus World Museum Scaperlonda negatives.

These cages of the Ringling Barnum Circus in 1928 may have been some that yielded contraband. Circus World Museum Scaperlonda Photo.

fourth section, it was on this section that most of the contraband was found.

The above four sections consisted of 97 loaded cars and many of the last section of ten or eleven living compartments each, with numerous contrivances and hiding places, which accounts for the time spent in the examination of the fourth section.

Under the law, a corporation is not any more exempt from examination than an individual."

An earlier article appearing in the June 28 edition of the Ogdensburg Republican-Journal had reported a number of complaints about the actions of the customs agents, thus the above later comment from Customs Collector Tulloch.

The Republican-Journal article told of the fourth section of the show train carrying the higher salaried performers and officers of the big show. The officers found it extremely difficult to determine the owners of bottles of liquor taken from the train as each person interviewed immediately denied all knowledge of its presence. In a few cases, however, the officers found positive proof of ownership and the owners were find \$2 for each bottle of beer discovered and \$5 for each bottle of whiskey.

Members of the circus threatened to lodge complaints against the officers, who, they said smashed in lockers and ruthlessly tossed personal effects of the circus employees about at will in their hunt for

booze. According to one official two members of the federal force broke bottles of liquor as quick as they found them and dropped the broken glass in the aisles.

In researching this story I wrote to the editor of the newspaper in Ogdensburg, New York, in October of 1971. Mr. Harold F. Brown, in his Editor's Column commented about my inquiry and the events surrounding the big booze raid of 1928. This brought all kinds of comments from readers. Many people called Brown and others wrote to him concerning on what they had heard or seen about the event.

A retired conductor recalled the customs and immigration men commanding a Rutland Railroad locomotive and caboose to garner the liquor and that the caboose was filled to a depth of four feet with liquor bottles.

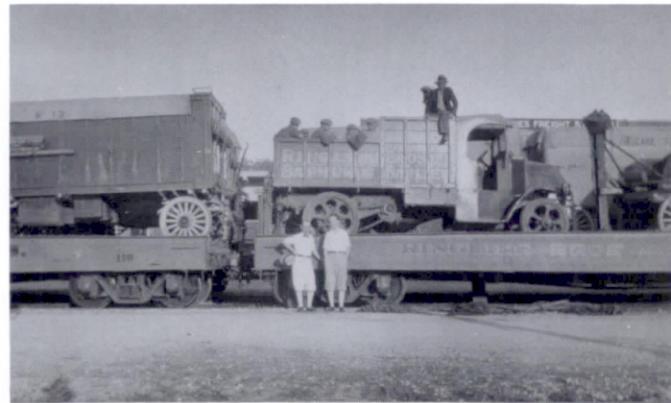
Some other folks recalled that there were many localities who received gifts of liquor from the circus people and there were others who found bottles along the tracks.

The conductor said the train left Malone but was stopped again at Norwood, where an animal trainer went into the wild animal cages to retrieve bottles hid there.

According to Leroy E. Brooks, retired immigration official, the raid was carried out in a legal manner by customs and immigration officers. There were no prohibition agents.

Brooks also denied that there was any

Another Scaperlonda train view of 1928 Ringling Barnum shows a Mack Bulldog truck and part of a stake driver. Circus World Museum Collection.





The Greatest Show on Earth carried nearly 20 zebras in 1928, they are shown on the Chicago Lake Front lot that year. Circus World Museum Atwell Photo.

damage to possessions of the circus people. Circus employees had claimed that the "feds" had deliberately smashed heavy suitcases without trying the catch, and that they had contemptuously tossed personal effects around in glee as if to bring purposely soil costumes and garments. The customs officials were reported to have dropped broken glass in the aisles of the cars creating a dangerous condition. The car reeked with alcohol fumes, causing some of the show folk to become sick and others to acquire a cheap jag.

In answer to my questions printed in the Ogdensburg paper Mr. Brooks wrote me a letter outlining his memory of the events in Malone.

He wrote as follows, "Officers of both the Customs and Immigration Service traveled to Montreal by passenger train and boarded the circus trains in the railroad yards to examine personnel and equipment enroute to the United States. Immediately upon arrival of the first section these officers reported that all sections must be detained for further inspection at the port as there was so much evidence of contraband liquor aboard that thorough examination enroute had been impossible. The officers stated that circus officials had paid their employees in Canada and, being close to the source of supply with plenty of money,

they had loaded up with wines, beer and liquor and stashed it away carefully for importation and later consumption."

"The four trains were accordingly spotted on various tracks in the railroad yard at Malone and at least one section occupied a siding adjacent to the Rutland RR line which intersected the New York Central at Malone. Patrol Inspectors of the Customs and Immigration Services, then not active along the border, were called to help in the search and for guarding seized contraband. They found bottles and cases concealed in many inaccessible places, in animal cages, under flooring, in hidden blankets, in carefully concealed personal effects. Of course, when the information got around that the circus was detained, many people congregated to add to the regular crowd that gathers when a circus visits town. Circus employees quickly tried to hide their supplies before the officers could call them and several just threw bottles and cases into ditches and the tall grass."

"Many onlookers hurried home with whatever they could get away with and I recently talked to a middle aged man who told me that he got his share though he was but a young boy at the time."

"Trucks were quickly pressed into service to load up and draw into Customs storage all contraband that was seized and I would estimate that at least eight or

Two of the old style four wheeled steel tank water wagons are shown in this 1928 San Antonio train view. Circus World Museum Scaperlanda Photo.



This 1928 view is for the baggage stock fans. The driver is raising the footboards for the trip back to the runs. Circus World Museum Scaperlanda Photo.

ten truck loads were thus salvaged for SUPERVISED BREAKING."

"I do not remember the number of aliens of illegal riders that were apprehended during the shakedown but the practice at that time was to simply refuse such inadmissible persons entry and to return them to Canada, transportation back to their point of embarkation being furnished by the New York Central RR, as their responsibility as a common carrier."

On June 28, 1928 an editorial appeared in the Ogdensburg Republican Journal. Part of it read as follows. ". . . Undoubtedly thousands of visitors here yesterday went home disgusted because they couldn't see the circus. But it wasn't Ogdensburg's fault and, apparently, it wasn't the fault of the Customs Officers. The men who must bear the burden, of course, are those in charge of the circus. They are in charge of the trains, the personnel and the animals. No thinking person, however, will believe for a moment that the management of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus condoned smuggling liquor into this country. No one who has tried to handle a motley throng of 1,800 men and women, the big majority of whom are wanderers and care little for enforcement of any law, will hold accountable the few men who hold the reins. Bringing 1,800 Americans across





the Canadian border from a two day stay in Montreal is a big task. Hard enough, perhaps to get them back at all. Harder to keep some from sneaking in a bottle or two of their favorite brand.

The circus owners lost thousands of dollars by the delay in showing here. Would they have allowed liquor on board those four trains regardless of the cost? We think not."

At the time of the Ogdensburg fiasco John Ringling was not on the Ringling-Barnum Circus. Mr. Ringling had taken his private pullman car "Jomar" from the circus train a day or two before the circus entered Canada at Montreal, June 24, 1928.

At that day and time there were not as many circus historians as there are today. To get the true facts has been a big job, but with the recent help of some interested

This cut of the third section flats was taken in San Antonio, Texas in 1928. Circus World Museum Scaperlanda Photo.

citizens of Ogdensburg I have been able to piece the story together.

John Kunzog in his book "*Tanbark and Tinsel*" best closes our story. We quote from Mr. Kunzog.

" . . . The program started at 10:30 PM (in Ogdensburg) and ran for three hours. Many parents returned home with their children when they learned how late the performance would be. Yet when the doors opened and the throng flocked in, less than a thousand empty seats could be found in the mammoth five-ring tent. Performers valiantly tried to compensate for the inconvenience of the late offering and plaudits of the spectators assured them of their appreciation.

Nor will those attending the circus that eventful evening ever forget the extemporaneous exhibition of the clowns who enacted a take-off of the raid. As their finale the clown band, first in discordant drolleries, concluded their skit with a rendition of "How Dry I Am."

Spectators howled with glee. The crowded tent resounded with the plaudits of approval that, like claps of thunder, rolled from section to section in rising crescendo. The seating sections became dimpled with white as feminine patrons waved their handkerchiefs in approval. The Eighteenth Amendment was the most unpopular law ever passed, and the sympathy of the spectators was with the circus troupers, not with the customs and prohibition inspectors, some of whom were watching the show." (Edited by F.D.P.)

Season's Greetings to Circus Performers And Circus Fans Everywhere

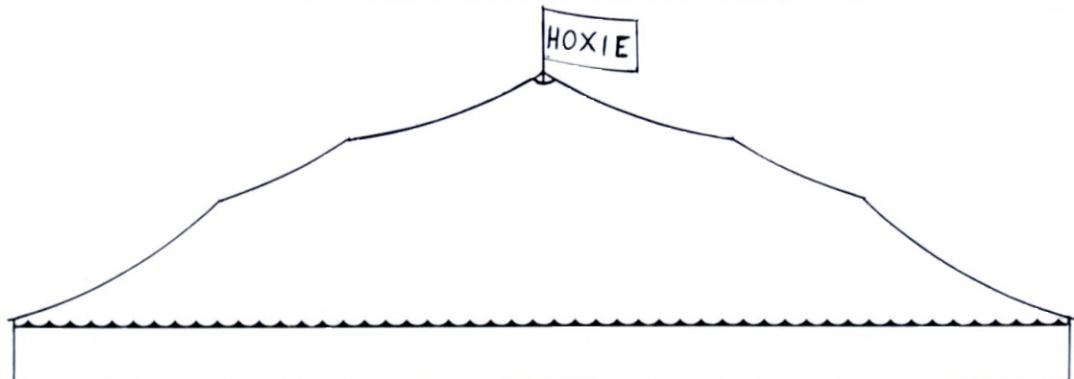
Grace Weckwerth
C.F.A. P.E.T.A. C.H.S.
C.C.A. and C.F. Great Britain

Many different ways of expressing inner feelings, many different methods of building friendships, cooperation and effectiveness, collections, pictures, concerts, exhibitions, reports, conventions. But all directed to one end — the circus, its perpetuation, advancement and enjoyment.

Here's to it, and them, and us!

To one and all
Heartiest greetings of the season
Joe M. Heiser, Jr.
Houston

JOY TO THE CIRCUS WORLD
"A NEW TENT IS BORN"



HOXIE BROS. CIRCUS

GREETINGS FROM SELLS-STERLING TENT NO. 79
CIRCUS FANS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

John Boyle, Baraboo
Wesley Brown, Baraboo
John Dombroski, Baraboo
Marvin Gauger, Baraboo
Don Francis, Baraboo
John Harris Wilson, Baraboo
Cliff (Modoc) Cowen Oshkosh
Peaceful James Moran, Decatur, Ill.
Joe Orth, Kenosha, Wis.
Duke B. Schumow, Milwaukee, Wis.

Benny J. Kronberger, Cleveland
Mrs. Bette Rosenstein, Flossmore, Ill.
Mr. Irv Bud Rosenstein, Flossmore, Ill.
Ms. Patti Ann MacCarthy, Chicago, Ill.
Miss Charlotte Sinclair, Chicago, Ill.
John Marietta, Pittsburg, Kansas
Paul Ingrassia, Joliet, Ill.
Hallie David Olstadt, Madison, Wis.
Oscar Runge, Milwaukee, Wis.
Eddie Salzwedel, Deerfield, Wis.

Honorary Members
Sophie Fox
Chas. P. Fox

C. A. Red Sonnenberg
Carol Rodkey
Bette Leonard

**THE SHOW THAT NEVER MISSED A PAYDAY
THE TENT THAT NEVER MISSED A DRINK
OUR SEVENTEENTH YEAR**

CIRCUS WINDOW CARDS

Circus advertising has taken many forms. Pictorial printing without question garnered the largest outlay of money over the years. The colorful lithographs were made in many sizes for posting on walls and barns, from two sheets up to thirty-six sheets, with the one and half sheets going in store windows. Many of the one sheets were also adapted for printing on 14 x 22" cardboard as window cards.

The window cards are very well-known to the generations reading the Bandwagon, as they can remember the cards used by Cole and Ringling-Barnum circuses through the 1930s and 1940s. The pasteboard cards were used by nearly every truck circus during past four decades. In many cases when money was short cards were all that a show could afford. Often only a date card with no illustrations.

The large lithograph firms had stock cards that could easily be imprinted with the shows title, often with the show's name done in special artwork that made the card look like it had been specially designed. However a large number of truck circuses did use specially design illustrations.

Because of the wide selection of window cards used by various shows we have selected a group from truck shows from the 1930s, 1940, and 1950s and 1960s as these are good examples of the wide range of design and printing quality.

The Downie Bros. card was used during that show's next to last season, 1937. Along with the date and prices it is imprinted with "Greatest Circus on Earth for



the Price", this take off of the "Greatest Show on Earth" would not be allowed today. The Downie card was a real litho, as opposed to letterpress printing and was done by the Erie Litho and Printing Co.

Ray Marsh Brydon in 1935 had special cards designed for his new Rice Bros. Circus in 1935, it is typical of the window card designs that were come using special artwork combined with photographs.

The Tom Mix Circus used paper from the U.S. Printing & Engraving Co., of Kansas City. The card shown here was done by that firm for the 1937 season. It is printed by letterpress.

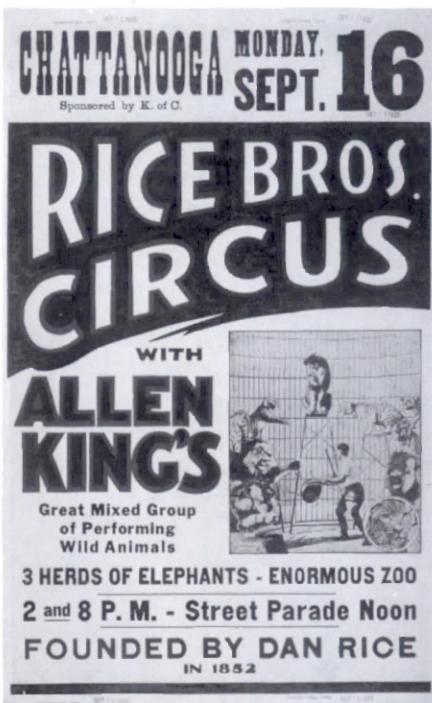
In 1939 the Haag Bros. Circus used a couple of designs on window cards, these were a bit unusual since the title and illustration used only a third of the space available.

The Parker & Watts Circus in 1938 ordered a number of special designs of paper from

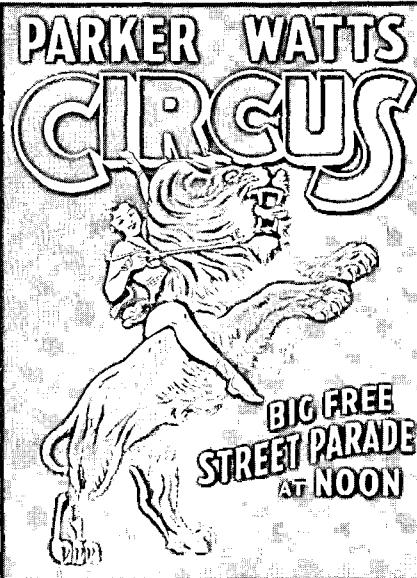


the Central Show Printing Co., of Mason City, Iowa. That firm printed this card that was used during the second and final season of 1939.

The Lewis Bros. Circus, out of Jackson, Michigan, also used much paper from



CADIZ TUESDAY,
AUG. 1

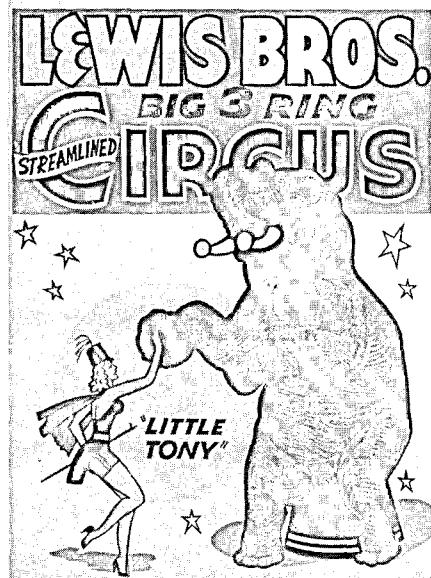


Central, the card shown here was used in 1939.

When George Hamid leased the Ray Rogers Wallace Bros. Circus in 1940 he had Erie Litho adapt old styles of Clyde Beatty bills that had been made up for the Cole show in 1935. This Hamid-Morton card was later used by the Clyde Beatty Circus.

In 1946 the Buck Owens Circus used paper from the Neal Walters Poster Corporation, of Eureka Springs, Arkansas. This is

GENEVA BALDWIN SHOW GRND
EAST NORTH STREET
ONE DAY ONLY
SAT. JUNE 21



a Walters stock design imprinted with the Owens title.

In the late 1950s Floyd King used cards printed by the Enquirer Printing Company, of Cincinnati, Ohio. This card used in 1949 combines special line drawings of the Cristianis along with a photograph.

The 1949 John Pawling Great London Circus card is a stock design of Enquirer, but with the special artwork on the title it looks like a special design.

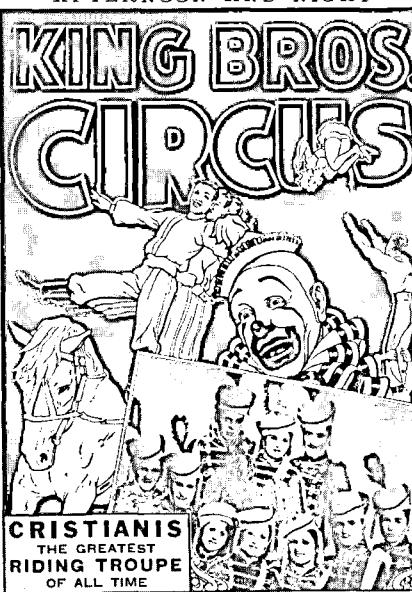
BUCK OWENS CIRCUS

Circus Lot 31 & 24 Junction

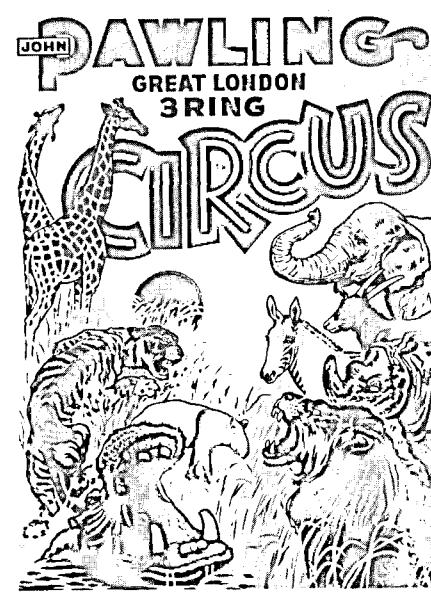
PERU
1 DAY SAT. JULY 13



MICHIGAN CITY
FRANKLIN ST CIRCUS GROUNDS
Sat. - MAY 21
AFTERNOON AND NIGHT



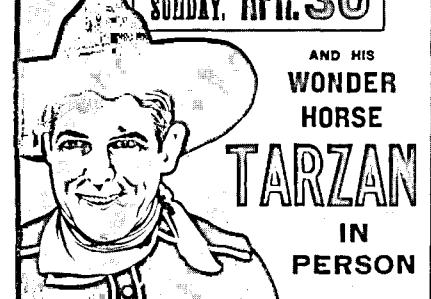
UNIONTOWN MONDAY MAY 16



BILLER BROS.
CIRCUS
PROUDLY PRESENTS

KEN MAYNARD

LOGANSPORT
FAIRGROUNDS
AFTERNOON & NIGHT
SUNDAY, APR. 30





The Biller Bros. Circus featured Ken Maynard in 1950 and Enquirer made this card for the show using a cut of Maynard that had been used by the Cole show a few years before. The location of the date in the center of the card is unusual.

The 1953 Diano Bros. Circus used this card printed by the Colorcraft Poster Co., of Oklahoma City. Colorcraft printed color programs for a few circuses in the early 1950s.



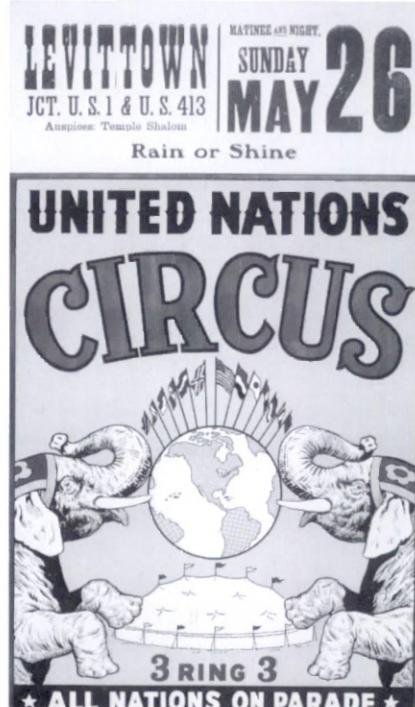
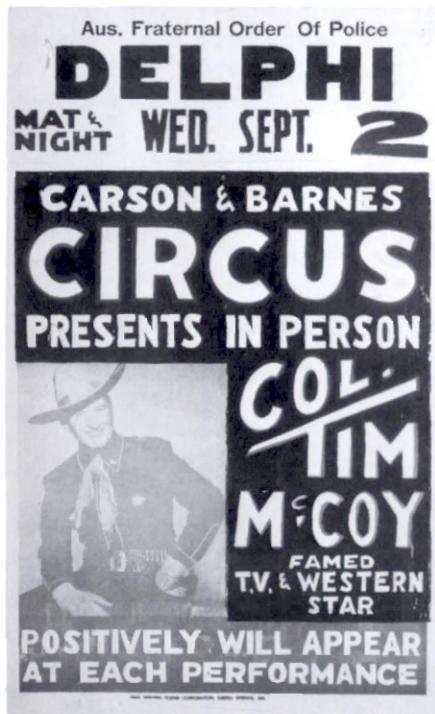
Jack Mills used very little paper during the years the Mills Bros. Circus toured, concentrating on window cards. The cards were sent to the sponsors who placed them in windows and on telephone poles. This 1954 card was printed by Triangle Poster of Pittsburgh, as were all used by the Mills show.

When Carson & Barnes Circus featured Col. Tim McCoy in 1959 the show used this special design from Neal Walters.



The Al G. Kelly & Miller Bros. Circus used a large amount of paper in its heyday. In later years most of the K-M paper came from Enquirer, using stock and special designs. This is an Enquirer card used in 1961.

One of the most unusual titles ever used by an American circus was selected by Milton "Doc" Bartok in 1963. This United Nations Circus card was printed by the Acme Show Print, of Hugo, Oklahoma. -Fred D. Pfening, Jr.



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1918

FORPAUGH-SELLS - 1910

BARNUM & BAILEY - 1907 - 1910

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for a

Merry Christmas

THE ORCHESTMELOCHOR WAGON AND ITS ORIGINS

By Fred D. Pfening, III



A slightly revised version of this paper was read at the 1972 CHS convention.

The oldest existing cravings from an American circus parade vehicle are housed at the Circus World Museum, not at the Ringling Museum of the Circus in Sarasota. Until recently, it was assumed by all but a handful that the oldest parade wagon in the country was the famous Five Graces bandwagon from the Forepaugh Show; however, recent research has shown that the cravings on the Orchestmelochor wagon, now at Baraboo, antedate those of the Five Graces by ten years. To prove this one must be aware of the complete history of the Orchestmelochor wagon which has never been fully told before.

The origins of the Orchestmelochor go back to 1868 when a pair of so-called Golden Horse bandwagons were added to the George F. Bailey and Great European shows. Both these shows were owned by the second generation Flatfoot partnership of George F. Bailey, Lewis June, Avery Smith, and J. J. Nathans. Newspaper reports from 1868 to 1871 prove conclusively that there were indeed two Golden Horse bandwagons. Unfortunately, we have only a photograph of the one that appeared on the Bailey show, the Wisconsin Dells picture of 1868 discovered by George Chindahl in the early 1950's. Since that wagon's mudboard and the ellipses on the sides of the body match almost exactly the same features on the Three Tiered tableau, which first appeared on the Great European Circus in 1864, there is little doubt that the Golden Horse band wagons were of the same English origin as the 1864 group.

Some construction took place in 1876 that provides almost irrefutable evidence the Flatfoot partners held at least one and possibly both of the Golden Horse chariots

The only known picture of the G. F. Bailey Golden Horse chariot in 1868. Compare the wagon in this picture with the Liberty Bell wagon, and the Peoria photo. This picture is also well circulated.

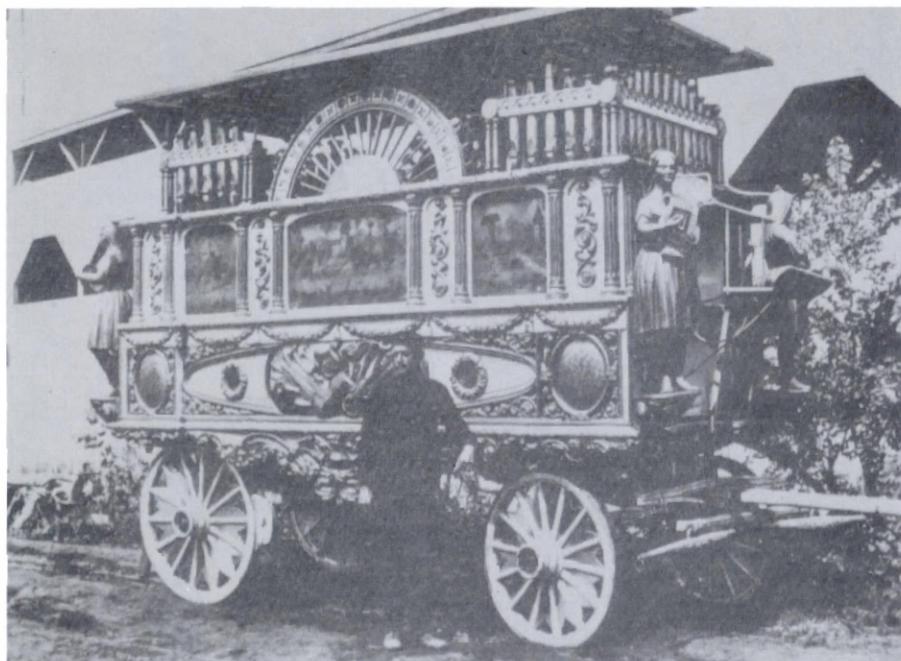
until that date. There are, however, two hints of property transfer that could possibly refer to these wagons. One appears in the 7 November 1868 *Clipper* which states that the Dan Castello Circus went South with one of Bailey's "Golden Chariots." If this refers to one of the Golden Horses, it must have been only a lease for some winter dates because the wagon was back on the Bailey show in 1869. The second possibility is the listing of a bandwagon in a 24 February 1872, *Clipper* ad for the impending public auction of the Great European property at Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Whatever bandwagon this may have been was sold to James Robinson. It is interesting to note that in 1878 when Robinson filed petition for voluntary bankruptcy he listed among his liabilities \$1500 he still owned J. J. Nathans for the chariot. Let it be said, concluding the Robinson incident, that while it is certain that he owned a bandwagon from the Great European show, it logically could not have been one of the Golden Horse chariots. Of course, those who have done the slightest research on parade wagons realize that sometimes logic, which in the sense I use it here also implies intuition, doesn't mean a thing. For example, there is no logical way the Phoenician Galley wagon, built as part of the 1903 Barnum and Bailey parade build-up, could have been on Forepaugh Sells in 1906; yet, we have a picture of it that proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that the wagon was on the show. Nevertheless, I shall endeavor to show what follows is so much more "logical"

that I have discounted these "hints of transfer" as being either of the Golden Horse wagons.

In 1876 the Flatfoots bought into the Barnum show. This was also the year that the Liberty Bell Tableau and the Nation wagon were built from the two Golden Horse chariots. The Liberty Bell wagon was little more than the G.E. Bailey Golden Horse chariot with the center steed replaced by a large bell. The other wagon was remodeled into a float with Laffeyette and Washington on the top instead of the horse. The 21 August 1878, *Ohio State Journal* of Columbus wrote that the Liberty Bell Tableau was "covered with classical engravings, its sides lined with panels of transparent glass, and mounted in the center of this beautiful structure a facsimile of the old independence bell."

I must admit that I have found no newspaper references to the so-called Nation wagon. In fact the only indication that this wagon existed comes from Barnum show advertising for the years 1876-1878. Although this seems a first glance a poor source, it should be remembered that we know every other wagon appearing in Barnum advertising existed because of pictures, and it therefore seems to be a reliable source. Neither of these wagons were used after the 1878 season.

Although others, notably the late Richard E. Conover, believed differently, the year 1879 was the first the Orchestmelochor wagon was used in the configuration usually associated with it. Conover argued that 1876 was the first year for the wagon. He based this conclusion on a parade review in the 27 April 1876 *New York Herald* which listed a "huge harmonicon worked with a small steam engine," as part of the procession, and an ad in the 27 January 1877, *Clipper* which listed



for sale a "large size trumpet organ and wagon, built for P.T. Barnum at a cost of \$5000; equal to a full size brass band and one of the finest tableau wagons for a street parade," by the real estate firm of Truesdell and Brown of Chicago. Because he could not account for the sale of the wagon to Truesdell and Brown, and because he could not find a reference to the wagon in 1877 and 1878, Conover was always a bit unsure about his assertion that 1876 was the first year for the Orchestmelochor; it now appears his doubts were correct. I believe this 1876 "harmonicon" wagon was a wagon built for the show in 1873, and has nothing to do with this story.

After discounting the Conover thesis, proving that 1879 was the first year the Orchestmelochor was used is not difficult. The advertising for the show in 1879 an-

This is the best picture of the Orchestmelochor wagon in its original configuration. This is the Peoria photo mentioned in the text. To list a source for this picture would be absurd because it has been circulated for years and can be found in perhaps a hundred collections.

nounced that the wagon was new, while 1880 ads noted that it was the second year for the vehicle. Also, while neither the 1879 *Clippers* nor Stuart Thayer's comprehensive research on the 1879 season give any hint that 1879 was the first year for the wagon, it was noticed in newspaper reviews for the first time during the 1879 season. This, I believe is more

The Liberty Bell wagon on the Barnum Circus between 1876 and 1878 from a lithograph at the American Antiquarian Society.



conclusive evidence than the show's publicity.

The lower deck of the Orchestmelochor wagon was built from the Liberty Bell or Nation wagon. This can be concluded by comparing the pictures as well as correlating the dates. It is perhaps best to compare the base of the wagon in the 1868 G.F. Bailey picture, which became the Liberty Bell Wagon in 1876, with the famous 1891 Peoria photo of the Orchestmelochor. Note the similarity of the mudboards and the lower deck; only the Mazepa scene, which appear on the wagon when it was the Golden Horse and the Liberty Bell, has been replaced by the musical instruments now associated with the Orchestmelochor.

I do not know from which wagon, the Liberty Bell or the Nation, the Orchestmelochor was built. Perhaps it was a combination of the two although I am inclined to believe it was the Liberty Bell. Nevertheless, I think the evidence is conclusive that the Orchestmelochor wagon had its origins in one of these two wagons, who themselves had their origins in the Golden Horse chariots which were imported in 1868.

The first known picture of the Orchestmelochor was taken in Janesville, Wisconsin in 1886. The *Clipper* of 3 December 1887, proclaimed the Orchestmelochor was destroyed in the winter quarters fire that engulfed the Neptune wagon. Like much in the *Clipper* this report is exaggerated because of the previously mentioned 1891 Peoria, Illinois picture.

If the Peoria picture is correctly dated, the wagon was cut down to its present-day configuration between 1891 and 1894 when an auction catalogue for the Barnum and Bailey Circus lists the top off this wagon for sale. The first picture of the wagon after it was remodeled appears in the background of the set of pictures showing the Barnum show parade leaving the lot in Chester, England. It is noteworthy that the Orchestmelochor does not appear on the inventory of the Barnum and Bailey show in Europe as a parade wagon, although it may have been included in the listing as a baggage wagon. The Chester photo is the only known picture of the wagon on the Barnum show in its present configuration. There is no evidence that the wagon was used in the 1903 and 1904 parades.

Over the winter of 1909-1910 this wagon, along with two former Forepaugh Sells tableaus were sold to the Miller brothers for use on their 101 Ranch Wild West show. It was used on the Ranch until 1916, and on the Jess Willard show in 1917. After the Willard show folded the equipment, including this wagon, was acquired by the Horne family of Kansas City, who dabbled in buying and selling circuses.

In 1920 George Christy purchased the Orchestmelochor wagon from the Hornes. He used it as his number one bandwagon, and later converted it into a

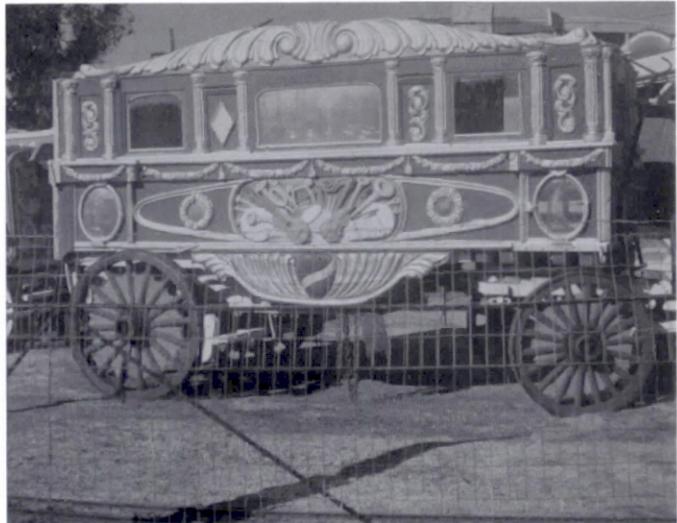


The corner statues from the Orchestmelochor on a Ringling Bros. World's Greatest Shows cage between 1912 and 1915. This cage was later numbered 77 on the Ringling-Barnum show. Original cabinet photo courtesy of Albert Conover.

ticket wagon. It also appeared on Christy's number two show, Lee Bros., in 1925 and 1926.

In 1936 Christy sold this wagon, along with much other property, to Ken Maynard for his wild west show. After the Maynard show closed almost immediately after it opened, this wagon was deposited at the Bradley and Kaye Amusement park in California. It remained there until the middle 1950's when it was purchased by Walt Disney. Through the courtesy of the Disney studios the wagon now resides in Baraboo.

The corner statues from the Orchestmelochor (as shown in the Peoria picture) are still in existence. After the wagon was rebuilt the corner statues were removed



and placed on a plain cage. Although it cannot be confirmed, this cage almost certainly appeared on the Barnum and Bailey show from about 1894 to 1909. In 1910 it was shipped to Baraboo with other Barnum equipment for the 1910 and 1911 Forepaugh Sells Circus. From 1912 to 1918 it appeared in Ringling Bros. parades and from 1920 until 1944 it appeared in the Ringling-Barnum menagerie. Sometime during the 1944 season the cage was deposited at Emerson's Wild Animal Farm near Hartford, Connecticut. It remains there today, with one statue having been stolen and the remaining three rotting apart more each day.

As in nearly all other essays I have written on the history of the circus, I gladly conclude this one by thanking my friends who gave me information and helped me thrash out my ideas. I particularly want to thank Fred Dahlinger, Jr. and Stuart Thayer for their important contributions to this article.

A much larger intellectual debt must be

The Orchestmelochor in its current configuration. This picture was taken at either the Disney back lot, or the Bradley and Kaye Amusement Park; in any case it was before the wagon arrived at Baraboo. Richard Conover photo.

acknowledged the late Richard F. Conover who discovered the two paramount conclusions of this essay: that there were two Golden Horse wagons, and that the Orchestmelochor wagon was built from the carvings off the Golden Horses. Although I had access to documents of which Conover was unaware and although I have reached some conclusions different from those Conover did in his tentative notes on the subject; I want it to be public knowledge that the reason I am listed as the author of this article is because I wrote it, not because I did the amount of research that is implicit in the authorship of any essay of an historical nature.

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A SHORT ANALYSIS OF STEAM CALLIOPE HISTORY BEFORE 1900

By Fred Dahlinger, Jr.

A number of papers were presented at the CHS convention, held in Baraboo, Wisconsin, in August 1972. All of these will be published in the BANDWAGON. We failed to note in the last issue that the Chang Reynolds article "The Giraffe in the American Circus", was one of the convention papers.

The following article is also one of the 1972 convention papers.

There is now little doubt that the idea for a calliope originated in the mind of William Hoyt of Dupont, Indiana, in 1851. Articles published at that time clearly indicate that the model he conceived incorporated all of the identifiable features of a calliope except one, the double puppet valve. The lack of this essential element is a clear indication that Hoyt never experimented with his idea, for he would have found that the then universal single puppet valve was unsuitable for calliope usage.

Additional stories attributing the development of the calliope to others are false. The steam organ attributed to William of Malmesbury in the 12th century was the result of a faulty translation of a treatise on pipe organ construction. Hill and Robson, mechanical organ builders of London, have been credited with building a steam blown organ for Czar Nicholas I in 1836, but this was simply an organ that used a steam generator to turn a crude turbine which in turn operated the air pump which actually sounded the pipes. The perpetuated story of a calliope constructed by French showman F. L. Calliope in 1648 is easily disproven by the simple fact that the steam whistle was not developed until 183 years later. In 1831, one Adrian Stephens, a Cornish mine engineer, developed the steam whistle as a signal to workmen that one of the steam boilers was low on water. Shortly thereafter it found wide usage by many others, as Stephens failed to patent his invention, possibly in the interest of humanity.

In the United States, the whistle was first applied to two railroad locomotives completed in 1836. Soon it was placed on a steamboat on Narrangansett Bay in Rhode Island. It was not introduced on the "Western waters" until about 1843 or 1844, but was not required by law until 1855.

With the essential whistle available, Hoyt could proceed with his work; but there is no evidence to show he actually constructed an instrument, and it remained for Joshua C. Stoddard of Worcester, Massachusetts, to experiment and

perfect the first calliope. According to tradition, he had been working on it for several years and had employed the help of pipe organ builders; Worcester was a center of organ building in the nineteenth century and this seems plausible. The work took place at the Upper Junction shops in Worcester, probably due to the readily available supply of steam to test his models. The close vicinity to the railroads undoubtedly spawned the idea of sales to these common carriers.

Finishing his work, Stoddard applied for and was granted patent No. 13,668 on October 9, 1855, for an "Apparatus for producing music by steam or compressed air." He must have known of Hoyt's conception, otherwise he would have made his claims more inclusive, claiming the basic instrument. Stoddard claimed only the combination of the basic instrument and studded barrel and his double puppet valve. The great advantage in this valve lies with the fact that it makes the calliope much easier to play. The force needed to operate the valve and whistle is equal to the difference in face area of the two unequal puppets multiplied by the pressure of operation. This force can be further reduced by the lever arrangement leading to the keys. Having puppet "A"

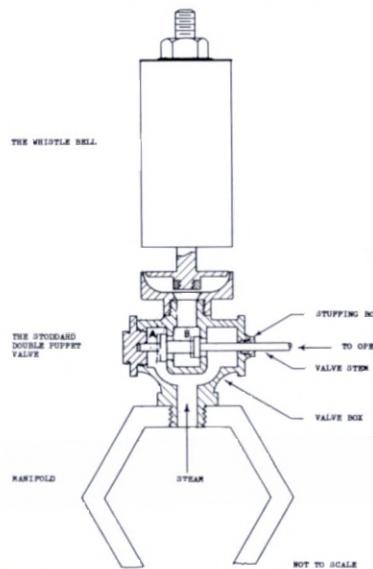
larger than puppet "B", the action of the steam pressure upon "A" will keep the valve closed until the valve stem is depressed.

The utilization of steam at high pressures as the working fluid necessitates the double puppet construction. Many of the calliopes constructed today would not need this valve, as many use electric solenoids to activate the whistles instead of the classic tracker action, which relies upon the strength of the player's fingers. The solenoid action increases the playability of the calliope much more than the double puppet valve does. However, the Stoddard valve allows more steam to pass through into the bell cavity, giving a greater volume of sound. The complete immersion of the resonating bell in steam also produces a more homogeneous tone; if the double puppet valve were not used these advantages would be lost.

With Stoddard having perfected and patented his calliope, he and others proceeded to set up a company to manufacture them. Stoddard was not one of the principal backers, apparently, as in mid 1856 one Henry A. Denny is listed as president of the company. Stoddard later went out of the picture entirely, as Denny later claimed the patent himself, and met no opposition. Under his guidance, the American Steam Music Company, as it was later known, sponsored various exhibitions of their instruments; first on a steam tugboat in New York harbor, later on a railroad flatcar traveling from Springfield, Massachusetts, to Indianapolis, Indiana. Later presentations were made at the Crystal Palaces, both in England and the United States. These showings stirred a lot of interest in the calliope and shortly its fame spread from coast to coast.

For several reasons, the controversy about the calliope did not bring in the orders. Wagon mountings were difficult because stationary boilers were large and would require at least two wagons to carry the apparatus. The railroads and steamboat industry maintained a lackadaisical attitude toward the calliope because it would consume too much steam, taxing the boilers, possibly causing delays in schedules and an undesirable reputation in an era of cutthroat competition. Needless to say, when the novelty of the instrument wore off, interest in it waned, and sometime in 1861 or shortly thereafter the American Steam Music Co. ceased operations, after having built only about fifteen calliopes.

Only three circuses purchased calliopes from this company; small, straight mani-



This cross section of a Stoddard style whistle shows the double puppet construction. Puppet "A" is larger than puppet "B" to keep the valve closed until the steam is depressed. The valve is shown in the closed position, the dotted lines showing the open valve. Drawing by the author.



fold instruments were acquired by Nixon & Kemp in 1857 and Sands, Nathans & Co. in 1858. Both of these machines required two wagons, one for the instrument and another for the boiler. In 1858 Levi J. North Purchased one of the larger, double manifold instruments for his circus, and succeeded in mounting both calliope and boiler on one four wheel framework. None of these calliopes lasted after 1860 with their original shows.

Although others have been searching for a calliope builder to bridge the 1861-1871 gap, it is apparent that no new calliopes fell into disrepute. Those river-boats which possibly added a calliope undoubtedly secured an old American Steam Music Co. instrument. The only reference to one on a circus in this period is an inconspicuous mention of one in an 1869 newspaper advertisement for G. G. Grady's Old Fashioned American Circus, and for which no documentation exists; in fact, not all of Grady's ads mentioned

This 34 whistle American Steam Music Company calliope of 1859 vintage is shown in front of the Christian Kratz foundry in Evansville, Indiana. George Kratz is at the boiler controls. Note the studded barrel below the keyboard. Photo courtesy of the Evansville Museum of Arts and Science.

the words "steam calliope." The failure of the calliope company, the presence of the Civil War and the existence of Stoddard's patent rights until 1872, though not restricting the basic instrument, were enough to keep anyone from venturing into the calliope business.

The reason for presenting this paper is to commemorate those individuals responsible for bringing the steam calliope back to the circus lot after an eleven year

George Kratz is shown at the right of another of his early calliopes. This photo was taken outside his foundry in Evansville, Indiana. Knecht Collection.



absence. If not for their efforts 100 years ago, the calliope would probably have been all but forgotten about, just another unsuccessful venture in the musical instrument business.

Whoever it was, Andrew Haight, George DeHaven or one of the angels of the 1872 Great Eastern Circus, they induced a bright individual to design a calliope that would be acceptable for circus usage; one with all components mounted in a single wagon; one with a boiler small enough so it could easily be transported either through the mud or on a railroad flat car, but large enough to keep the instrument supplied with steam while on the parade route or giving the bally on the lot. It should be remembered that the steels available to us today were not available in the 1870's, and consequently wrought iron was used in the construction of boilers, making them bulkier and heavier because it lacks the tensile strength of steel.

The identity of the firm(s) that started building calliopes in 1872 is still a mystery, but it is now only a step away, in fact we probably know their names, but lack the essential confirmation. The wagons were, with a slight reservation, built by the Henry Ohlsen Wagon Co. of Cincinnati. In 1886 he claimed to have built the first calliope wagon, which would have been the 1872 Great Eastern calliope or another of these early machines. There is now concrete evidence that he was in the calliope business as early as 1877, when he built one for the Great Roman Hippodrome.

The builder of the instruments is more obscure. Tradition has credited the Kirkup & Van Duzen Bell Works, however, such a firm never existed, at least not in that form. The William Kirkup & Son and Vanduzen & Tift firms were separate foundries, although both were still located in Cincinnati. Thomas J. Nichol, well known calliope builder at a later time, was a bookkeeper for Kirkup in 1892 and might have received his training in the art at that time. This is the only link we presently have connecting Kirkup and calliopes.

The only mention connecting the Vanduzen & Tift bell foundry with a calliope is a short note in the late Phillip Graham's *Showboats*, which credits the firm with building an instrument for one of Capt. A. B. French's New Sensation showboats in 1887. This firm, also known as the Buckeye Bell Foundry or the Buckeye Bell and Brass Foundry, is not to be confused with the Buckeye Iron & Brass Company of Dayton, Ohio, a firm which also built calliopes, but not until after the turn of the century.

Others also dabbled in the calliope business in the 1870's. Family tradition credited George Kratz with repairing an old instrument found in the junkpile of his father's foundry in Evansville, Indiana. The only concrete evidence in this direction is an ad in the 1875 *New York Clipper* placed by his father, Christian

Kratz, offering to sell a mounted steam calliope. A photograph of this reworked American Steam Music Co. instrument in front of the Kratz foundry has been in circulation for some time, but had been misidentified.

In 1879 the Boyd & Peters Transatlantic Show out of Royal Oak, Michigan, claimed to have built their own calliope. This might confirm speculation that amateurs also tried their hand at calliope building; at least it would be interesting to see the results of their effort.

To finish and tie together this short analysis, the history of the calliope before 1900 can be divided into four distinct periods. The first contains its initial development and exposure in the United States under the Hoyt, Stoddard and American Steam Music Co. regimes, 1851-1861. The second is the 1861-1871 decade which lacked a concentrated effort to build calliope.

The third period begins with the 1872 Great Eastern construction and carries well into the 1890's. It marks the resurgence of calliope usage and the introduction of several firms who constructed calliope as a marginal business. The final period, beginning about 1895, continues forward to the twentieth century. During this time George Kratz and Thomas J. Nichol enter the picture and a variety of instrument configurations are encountered. The future of calliope was foretold when George Kratz started operating one of his small steam calliope by compressed air.

NEW HALL OF FAME DIRECTOR APPOINTED

On December 11, 1972 CHS member J. Allen Duffield assumed the duties of Director of the Circus Hall of Fame in Sarasota, Florida.

Mr. Duffield retired following 34 years as a pharmaceutical salesman in Pennsylvania. For the past five years he has contracted dates for Hoxie Bros. Circus in the Harrisburg, Penna. area.

Duffield is the current Eastern Vice President of the Circus Fans Association of America and is also a member of the Circus Model Builders.

30 ORIGINAL CIRCUS HANDBILLS 1869-1881

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THE JOURNAL OF THE CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Vol. 16, No. 6

November - December 1972

Fred D. Pfening, Jr., Editor

Joseph T. Bradbury, Fred D. Pfening, III Associate Editors

Published bi-monthly by the Circus Historical Society, Inc. Publication, Advertising and Circulation office located at 2515 Dorset Rd., Columbus, Ohio 43221. Advertising rate: Full page \$40.00; Half page \$20.00; Quarter page \$12.00. Minimum ad \$8.00.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: \$7.00 per year to members; \$8.00 to non-members in North America; \$8.50 to non-members outside North America. Single copy \$1.30. Application to mail at second-class postage rates is pending at Columbus, Ohio.

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THIS MONTH'S COVER

Al F. Wheeler operated circuses by himself and in partnership with others from 1903 until 1933. From 1911 to 1913 Wheeler was associated with Andrew Downie operator of the Downie & Wheeler railroad circus.

In 1915 Wheeler toured a wagon show using the title Al F. Wheeler New Model Shows. The color courier on this issue's cover was used that year.

The Erie Lithograph Company designed the four page advertising piece with full color on the front and back. The inside pages are printed in blue using stock Erie cuts.

The original came from P. M. McClinton who noted on it "best of class", suggesting it was one of the finest color couriers used.

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GEORGE WESLEY ADKINS
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CIRCUS GHOSTS

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